

High School Lesson Plan 3

The Responsibilities of Citizenship: Voting

Materials needed

**Indicates materials included at the end of the lesson.*

- For the teacher:
 - Survey (Voting Rights and Responsibilities)*
 - Fact Sheet #3*
 - Vocabulary and Questions Sheet*
 - LCD projector, overhead projector, or chalk board
- For the students:
 - Survey (Voting Rights and Responsibilities)*
 - Fact Sheet #3*
 - Vocabulary and Questions Sheet*
 - Pen, pencil, paper

**If possible, the Survey (Voting Rights and Responsibilities)* may be distributed to other classes prior to beginning this lesson. The survey will be more valuable with a larger number of student responses to analyze. Results from other classes should be tabulated prior to beginning this lesson.*

Introductory Question for Discussion

1. Should voting be mandatory for all adult citizens in the United States? Why or why not?
[What about prisoners, the mentally ill, those owing back taxes on child support? What about permanent residents who are not citizens?]

Class Activity

- Distribute a copy of the Survey (Voting Rights and Responsibilities)* to each student and allow a few minutes for it to be completed.
- Tally the results for each question on the blackboard or overhead projector (if you have additional responses from other classes include those as well).
- Discuss and analyze the results as a group, noting where there is general agreement and which questions inspired a wide range of answers.

Small Group Activity (2-4 students)

- Divide the class into small groups.
- Distribute Fact Sheet #3* and Vocabulary and Questions Sheet* to each group. Students will use the Fact Sheet* to complete the Vocabulary and Questions Sheet.* *Give students ten to fifteen minutes to complete this activity.*
- Once all groups have completed the Vocabulary and Questions Sheet,* have them share their answers with the whole class. Conclude with a discussion of the Electoral College questions (on both the Fact Sheet* and the Vocabulary and Questions Sheet*) and a show of hands regarding who thinks that the Electoral College should be eliminated. Ask several students (from each side of the issue) to justify their positions.

Exit Activity: Quick Write

Based on the survey answers, discuss whether you think that Americans are willing to fight for the right to vote.

Extending the Lesson

- ▶ What is the **Electoral College** and what does it have to do with voting rights?
- ▶ Is it possible for someone to win the presidency without winning the popular vote? Explain.

The Constitution does not allow citizens to vote directly for a president; instead, each state chooses “electors,” and together all the states’ electors make up the Electoral College. The number of electors in each state equals the number of senators and congressional representatives in that state (so more populous states have more electors than less populated states). In modern times, many people have questioned the need for the Electoral College, especially since the election of 2000 when Al Gore received more popular votes than George Bush, but Bush won the electoral count. Do you agree that the Electoral College limits the rights of voters by allowing someone to win the popular vote but still lose the election? Why or why not?